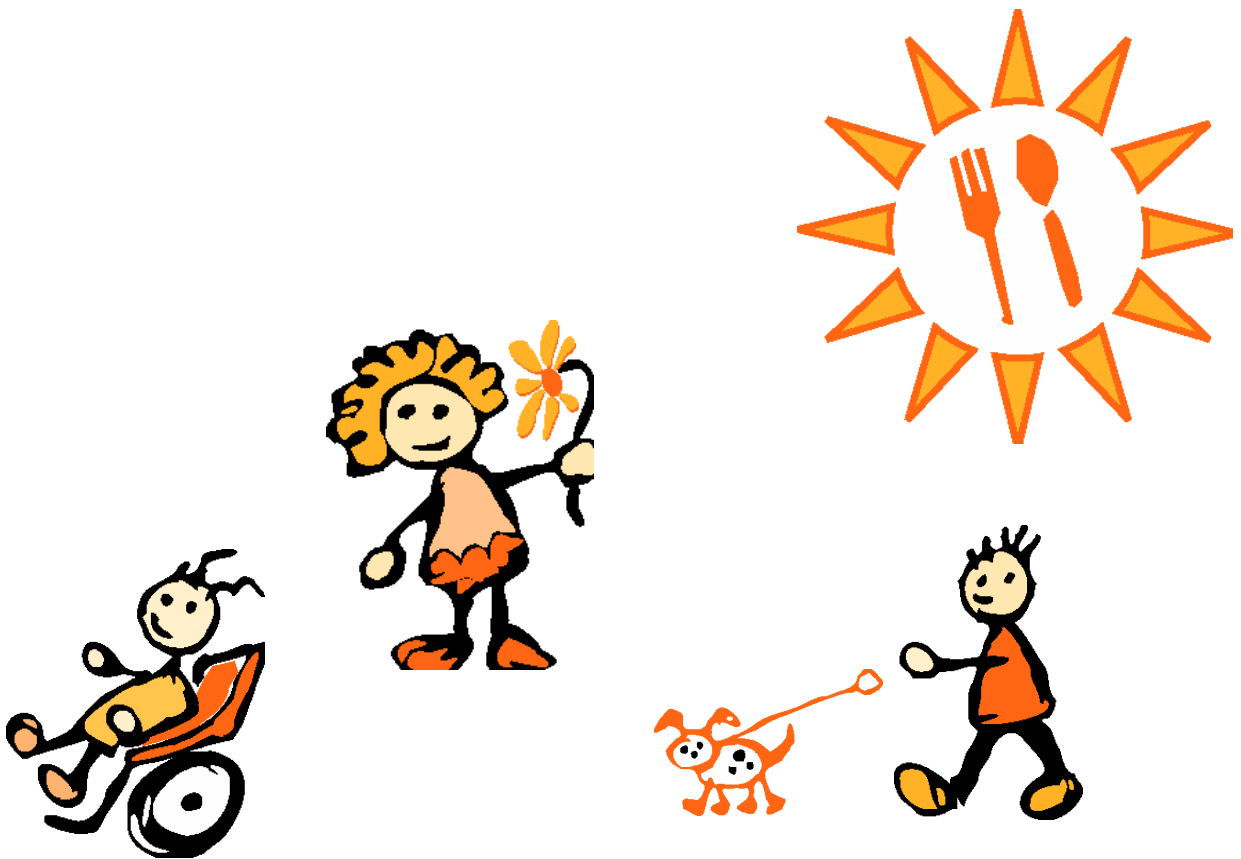


Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

Summer Food Service Program

2003 Monitor's Guide



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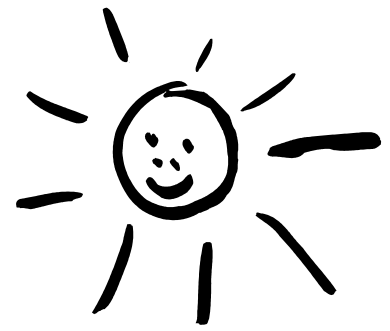
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Introduction

In this book, you will find information on:

- how the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is organized;
- your responsibilities as a monitor;
- the records that you are required to complete and instructions on how to fill them out;
- the meal pattern requirements for meals being served; and
- samples of the forms you'll need.

This guidance is designed to give you, as a monitor, a working knowledge of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and your duties and responsibilities as the sponsor's representative.

The SFSP provides nutritious meals to children and eligible disabled adults during vacation periods that are similar to those offered under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs during the school year. Meals are provided to children 18 years of age or under, and to individuals over 18 who have been determined by the State to be mentally or physically disabled and who participate in a public or nonprofit school program established for the disabled. Meals are served at open, restricted open, or closed enrolled sites in areas where poor economic conditions exist, migrant feeding sites, National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) sites, and residential and nonresidential camps.

Organizational Structure

SFSP sites are operated by public or private nonprofit sponsors-- school food authorities, colleges and universities, or residential summer camps; by units of local, municipal, county, or State or Federal government; and by private nonprofit organizations that meet certain legislated and regulatory criteria. The SFSP is administered within each State by the State education agency, or by an alternate State agency, or the appropriate regional office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

Your SFSP monitor job is of particular importance. As the key link between your sponsor and the site personnel, you must make sure that the sites operate smoothly in accordance with program guidance and requirements. This direct link between your sponsor's office and the food service sites is essential to ensure that the program functions properly. As the sponsor's representative, you must develop and maintain open communications and cooperative relationships with site supervisors and staff. You should also make everyone aware that you will work with the

site staff to help correct any problems and give additional training as necessary. Open communications with your supervisor are also essential so that the sponsor is aware of any site problems and what is being done to resolve them. This will also provide opportunities for the sponsor to provide you with any additional guidance you may need.

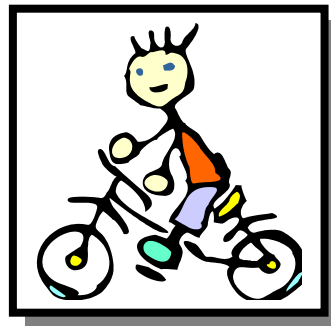
The sponsor is financially responsible for any meals served incorrectly or served to ineligible people. This could mean a substantial loss of money to the sponsor if problems at the sites are not corrected. Your responsibilities as a monitor will differ depending on whether the sponsor prepares the meals or a food service management company (or vendor) delivers meals to the site(s). This guidance covers monitoring of both types of operations—where the vendor delivers meals to the sponsor's sites and where sponsors prepare their own meals.

Training

Your sponsor is required to hold training sessions on program duties for monitors and other sponsor personnel. At the training session, monitor duties and responsibilities will be explained to you. You will receive the monitor review forms and any other records you may need to keep, such as mileage records. During the training, or at some point before you begin your duties, you will be told where the sites are located for which you will be responsible. Your sponsor will train you on procedures for monitoring meal counts, adjusting meal preparation or deliveries, reporting complaints to the vendor, and collecting site records.

You may also be asked to attend the training session required for site supervisors. This meeting will familiarize you with the specific duties of site supervisors and will allow you to meet the site supervisors with whom you will be working directly.

Many people working at sites may not be familiar with operating food service programs or they may not be accustomed to maintaining records. During your many reviews and visits, you will find it necessary to explain the importance of complying with program rules and show how operations can be improved. This type of ongoing training of site personnel is a basic responsibility of each monitor. You may decide that it is necessary to give new site workers additional training in program requirements. It is important to document this training in your report.

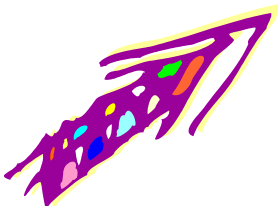


Monitor Responsibilities

Effective monitoring is necessary for many reasons. Monitoring ensures that sites operate according to program guidelines and that accurate site records are available to justify payment to the sponsor. But most important, monitoring ensures that children and/or eligible disabled adults in the community are getting nutritious meals. To be an effective monitor, you will be required to spend enough time at each assigned site to check all pertinent operations. Therefore, you must know the program requirements so you can spot problems at the sites quickly and recommend solutions.

As an official representative of the sponsor, you will be responsible for:

- checking site operations to make sure that the sites maintain adequate records and that the program is operating in accordance with the requirements;
- conducting site training as necessary, including training on the nondiscrimination policy;
- conducting pre-operational visits for new and problem sites;
- visiting all assigned sites within the first week of operation to ensure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any needed adjustments are made or problems resolved;
- reviewing food service operations of all assigned sites within the first 4 weeks of operation to thoroughly examine the meal service from start to finish, correcting problems and providing additional training where necessary;
- revisiting sites as necessary;
- reconciling any discrepancies in meal counts and records with the site supervisor;
- suggesting corrective action to the site supervisor for problems encountered;





- preparing reports of your site visits and reviews and ensuring that copies of the reports are included in an official file for each site; and
- informing the sponsor about problems found at a site and ensuring that corrective action is completed and documented.

Visits and Reviews

When monitors observe program operations at sites, they will usually make either a "visit" or a "review". A site "visit" requires a monitor to ensure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any apparent problems are immediately resolved. A site "review" requires the monitor to determine if the site is meeting **all** the various program requirements. To accomplish this, a monitor will have to observe a complete meal service from beginning to end. All visits and reviews must be conducted and documented. A sample Pre-Operational/Visit Form and Site Review Forms for Self-Preparation Programs and Vended Programs are included on pages 20-26.

The type of visits and reviews required are:



- **Pre-operational Visits** —Pre-operational visits are to be conducted for new and problem sites before a site operates the summer program. These visits are required to determine that the sites have the facilities to provide meal service for the anticipated number of participants in attendance and the capability to conduct the proposed meal service.
- **Site Visits** —All sites must be visited at least once during the first week of operation. These visits are required to make sure the food service operation is running smoothly and to verify information such as the site address, storage, holding and preparation facilities, and serving capacity.
- **Site Reviews** —All sites must be reviewed at least once during the first 4 weeks of program operations. If a site operates less than 4 weeks, the sponsor must still conduct a review. You will have to observe delivery or preparation of meals, service of meals, participants eating the meals, and clean up after meals. During each review you should discuss any concerns or problems with the site supervisor and other site staff. You should also instruct the site supervisor to call the sponsor's office immediately when help is needed and you are not there.

Review Procedures

Before reviewing the sites, you should be familiar with the site information sheets that your sponsor will give you. These sheets include the meal delivery schedules (time of delivery, type(s) of meal(s), and number of meals), and cycle menus for each site. The site information sheets describe the staffing pattern, method of meal preparation, meal services and times, and, if applicable, the approved level of meal service at the sites. Sponsors of most sites may be approved to serve up to two meals daily. The two meals may include either lunch and a snack or breakfast and lunch. This does not apply to sites where meals are served primarily to children of migrants or to residential camps. These sponsors may be approved to serve up to three meals or two meals and one snack with State agency approval.



As the summer progresses, you should be familiar with the records submitted by each site and any corrective action taken on any prior reviews or visits.

Conducting the Review



Before the Meal Service Begins

- Plan to arrive at the site before food is delivered or meals are prepared.
- Check to make sure that the assigned site supervisor or at least one alternate supervisory person who has been trained in program requirements is onsite. This person must be present during the meal service.
- Observe food delivery or meal preparation. Are meals handled according to local health codes? For example, does the refrigerated truck operate at the correct temperature? Are meals delivered on time? If the sponsor prepares the meals, are the facility and equipment adequate for the number of meals needed?
- For sites with delivered meals, observe if the site supervisor is counting the number of meals delivered. Does the number delivered equal the number ordered? Does the delivery receipt show the correct number delivered? Are all meals complete? Are any items spoiled?
- Observe whether the site supervisor signs only for delivered meals that are complete and wholesome and does not accept poor or incomplete meals or meals that are wholly or partially spoiled.
- Compare the number of meals delivered or prepared onsite with the daily participation records; observe trends and, when appropriate,

advise the sponsor and site supervisor to adjust the meal order to prevent excessive leftovers or excessive service of second meals.

- Make sure the site supervisor signs only *accurate* delivery receipts, making corrections as necessary on the slip before signing or refusing to sign if an entire delivery is rejected.

Observe Meal Preparation

- Compare a meal delivered or prepared with the cycle menu. Was the scheduled meal delivered or prepared that day?
- Observe the preparation of a meal if meals are not delivered. Are raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly washed before cooking and serving? Are hot and cold foods kept at the proper temperatures?
- Observe whether workers meet the health standards set by State and local authorities. Check to see if any problems found by health officials have been corrected.
- Check purchasing invoices if meals are prepared by the sponsor.

Observe the Meal Service

- Observe the *entire* meal service from delivery/preparing meals to clean up after the meal service. Does the meal service occur within the approved time frame?
- Are participants served complete meals?
- Is only one meal served to each participant?
- Are unauthorized adults served?
- Are all meals eaten at the site? (Do the State agency and the sponsor allow a piece of fruit or vegetable to be taken off-site? If so, is the site supervisor able to manage this optional policy adequately?)
- Is a site worker counting the meals as they are being served?
- Check plate waste (trash) for acceptability of menu items.
- Check to see that trash is being removed from the site on a regular basis. Are garbage bags and cans closed securely?

- Does the site comply with sponsor and local health department procedures for handling extra food?

Civil Rights

- Check to see if the site's nondiscrimination poster is displayed in a prominent place. If not, the sponsor will provide you with the poster.
- Determine if meals are served to all attending participants, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- Make sure that all participants have equal access to services and facilities at the site regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- Observe whether or not informational material in the appropriate translations is available concerning the availability and nutritional benefits of the program.

Claiming Meals

- Count the number of first meals served to participants.
- Count the number of second meals (if any) served to participants. When seconds are served, check to make sure that they are only served after all participants present have received their first meal. Determine if the number of seconds being served appears excessive. Remember that all reimbursable meals must be complete meals.
- Count the number of ineligible meals served and note the reason. For example, incomplete meals served or meals served to adults. (Note: if your sponsor is a school food authority, the sites you monitor may use “offer versus serve”(OVS). This means that participants may choose not to take one or more items that are offered. At these sites, a complete meal would be a meal that meets the OVS rules established by your State agency and sponsor. Check with your sponsor to make sure you understand the OVS rules.)
- Do your counts and the site supervisor's counts match?
- Some sites you review may have been approved to serve a maximum level of meals at each meal service. Check with your sponsor to make sure that sites with such approval do not claim meals in excess of the maximum number approved for each meal

service.

- Review daily records kept by the site supervisor. Determine whether they are complete and accurate records.
- If meals were served outside the approved time frame, were they disallowed?
- Are there many leftover meals? Are seconds recorded? If adjustments are not being made, instruct the site supervisor to make adjustments in the meal order as necessary.
- Compare all counts and calculations with the site supervisor's corresponding records and resolve any discrepancies.

Before You Leave The Site

- Complete the monitor's review form. Record your arrival and departure times. Record all violations and any corrective action taken.
- Make corrections on site, if possible. Be sure to document all corrective action.
- Report problems to the sponsor.
- Conduct a revisit, if necessary.

Monitor Site Review Form

You must complete a monitor site review form after each review. Your sponsor will provide you with these forms. The form includes your arrival and departure times, the site supervisor's name, certification statement of violations found, corrective action taken, and time and number of meals served. These forms are required records for the sponsor.

You must thoroughly explain the specific nature and extent of any problems and the action to be taken to correct these problems. For example, you would record "19 meals were served without milk" and document the action the site supervisor agreed to take to correct the situation.

Additional Responsibilities

Beneficiary Data Form

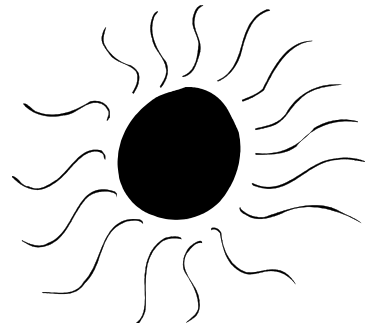
You must complete a racial/ethnic data form to report the categories of participants at each site. This form must be completed at least once during the site's operation or once per session for camps. A sample Racial/Ethnic Data Form is included on page 27.

You should determine a participant's racial and ethnic categories visually using your best judgment. A participant may be included in the racial and ethnic categories to which he or she appears to belong, identifies with, or is regarded as a member of by the community.

Potential Meal Service Problems

Experience has shown that monitoring the food service at sites is necessary to ensure good meal quality. Problems need to be solved quickly and routinely. As a monitor, you need to remind site supervisors often of their responsibility to promptly report changes in participation (up or down) to the sponsor. You may also need to explain to the site supervisor how to report participation changes. If a site has a maximum approved level for meals, you should emphasize that your sponsor will not receive reimbursement for the meals that exceed the maximum approved level for each meal service.

Sometimes participation at sites drops during the summer and the sponsor is not notified. When this happens, either too many meals are delivered or too much food is prepared and both food and money are wasted. The site supervisor should guard against over-ordering or preparing excessive meals. *This is a serious violation.* If a site is receiving or preparing too many meals, you should emphasize to the site supervisor that the meal order must be adjusted and report that need to your sponsor. This is especially important since excessive leftovers or seconds or the number of meals prepared may affect the sponsor's claim (second meals served in excess of 2 percent of first meals for the claiming period are not reimbursed). You must follow your sponsor's procedures for transferring or returning excess meals, or stopping the meal service.



Site Activities

Know the activity schedule of each assigned site. If the site will not be open on a certain day, you must alert the sponsor in advance so meal deliveries can be cancelled and reviews are not scheduled for that day. If the site is planning a field trip, the sponsor must notify the vendor, if applicable, and the State agency in advance. Meal service must be approved for the place where the participants will be that day.

The State agency must be notified of any changes (additions and/or cancellations) to scheduled field trips. If the State agency is not notified prior to the field trip, meals served may be considered “consumed off-site” and not be reimbursed. Care must be taken to insure the safety and quality of the meals by using adequate storage equipment to transport them.

Sometimes sponsors experience problems because sites close earlier than originally scheduled. You, as the monitor, will be responsible for keeping informed about the plans of each site supervisor. This way, you can make sure your sponsor is promptly notified if the site decides to close earlier than the date indicated on the site information sheet.

On-site activities encourage kids to keep coming back and to bring along their friends. Therefore, let your sponsor know of any activities at sites that could be used to help promote the SFSP and increase participation at other sites.



Records

Daily Meal Count Records

Sponsors will provide site supervisors with a supply of a daily record form. This form is very important and must be completed each day. Sponsors will not receive money for the meals served at their sites if the sites do not keep this daily record. This record must be accurate, and site staff must enter the appropriate information at the end of each meal service. You may be required to collect this record daily or weekly from each site, and return them to the sponsor's office. A frequent, uniform basis of collection is necessary to minimize the possibility of losing these records, since sponsors receive reimbursement for the meals they serve based on this daily record. This record must include:

- the number of meals delivered or prepared, by type (breakfast, snack, lunch, supper). Vended programs must support this information with a signed delivery receipt. Programs with a central kitchen should also support this information with a signed delivery receipt for good program management. A designated member of the site staff must verify the adequacy and number of meals delivered by checking the meals when they are delivered to the site;
- the number of complete first meals served to participants, by type;
- the number of complete second meals served to participants, by type;
- the number of excess meals, or meals leftover;
- the number of non-reimbursable meals;
- the number of meals served to program adults, if any; and
- the number of meals served to non-program adults, if any.



Daily Record Reviews

Review the daily records kept by the site supervisor. Check to make sure forms are completed and signed. If meals are not prepared on site, the information on the delivery receipts should match the information on the forms. Site supervisors should have a signed delivery receipt available to show the deliveries for all meals served. If the number of meals delivered is the same as the number served each day, or the same number of meals is recorded each day, this may mean that no one is actually counting the number of meals received and served. Be sure to observe and take appropriate corrective action.

Accuracy of Records

You must remind site supervisors that complete and accurate daily records at the site level are the only way to document program performance and guarantee the sponsor's reimbursement. The sole basis for reporting the number of meals served is accurate daily records. These records account for all categories of meals served and are signed by the site supervisors. Familiarize yourself with the forms to be used for this purpose since you will be assisting site supervisors in the proper use of these forms.

Collection of Site Forms

If your responsibilities include collecting site forms and delivery receipts, be sure to keep collections on schedule. If records cannot be obtained from a particular site, this is a *serious* problem that your sponsor should know about immediately.



Meal Pattern Requirements

As a monitor, you will check meals at sites to see that the meal pattern requirements are being met. These requirements assure well-balanced, nutritious meals that supply the kinds and amounts of foods that children require to help meet their nutrient and energy needs. You must make sure that meals served at your assigned sites meet the meal pattern requirements listed on the following page.

Monitoring Meals

Compare the menus of the meals to be served at each site with the meal pattern requirements and learn to recognize meal deficiencies. Remember that each meal must contain all required components and that the served quantity of each component must meet the minimum portion size. If meals are incomplete, if portions are too small, or if the food is spoiled, participants are not getting a nutritious meal. Spoiled food, juice, or milk can make the participants sick. Make sure site personnel do not serve any spoiled food to participants. If meals are delivered by a vendor, the site supervisors should be recording any deficiencies on the delivery receipts and discussing any problems with you. You should immediately report any problems with deliveries or meals to the sponsor so that the vendor can be promptly notified.

Reimbursable Meals

For a Meal to be Reimbursable it Must Contain: *		
Breakfast	Lunch or Supper	Snack
One serving of milk; One serving of a vegetable or fruit or a full-strength juice; and One serving of grain or bread. A meat or meat alternate is optional.	One serving of milk; Two or more servings of vegetables and/or fruits; One serving of grain or bread; and One serving of meat or meat alternate.	Must contain two food items. Items must be from a different component. However, juice cannot be served when milk is served as the only other component.

* At sites where “Offer Versus Serve” is allowed, meals that are offered to participants must meet the meal patterns as shown in the chart above.

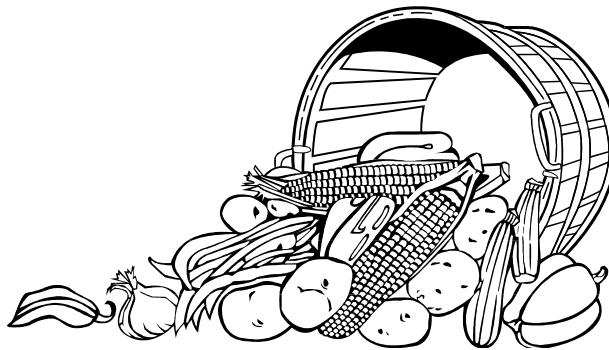
Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns

Food Components	Breakfast	Lunch or Supper	Snack¹ (Choose two of the four)
Milk Milk, fluid	1 cup (8 fl. oz.) ²	1 cup (8 fl. oz.) ³	1 cup (8 fl. oz.) ²
Vegetables and/or Fruits Vegetable(s) and/or fruit(s) or Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice or an equivalent quantity of any combination of vegetables(s), fruit(s), and juice	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (4 fl. oz.)	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup total ⁴	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (6 fl. oz.)
Grains and Breads⁵ Bread or Cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, etc. or Cold dry cereal or Cooked pasta or noodle product or Cooked cereal or cereal grains or an equivalent quantity of any combination of grains/breads	1 slice 1 serving $\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 oz. ⁶ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 slice 1 serving $\frac{1}{2}$ cup $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 slice 1 serving $\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 oz. ⁶ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup $\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Meat and Meat Alternates Lean meat or poultry or fish or alternate protein product ⁷ or Cheese or Eggs or Cooked dry beans or peas or Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters or Peanuts or soy nuts or tree nuts or seeds or Yogurt, plain or sweetened and flavored or An equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternates	(Optional) 1 oz. 1 oz. $\frac{1}{2}$ large egg $\frac{1}{4}$ cup 2 tbsp. 1 oz. 4 oz. or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	 2 oz. 2 oz. 1 large egg $\frac{1}{2}$ cup 4 tbsp. 1 oz.= 50% ⁸ 8 oz. or 1 cup	1 oz. 1 oz. $\frac{1}{2}$ large egg $\frac{1}{4}$ cup 2 tbsp. 1 oz. 4 oz. or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

For the purpose of this table, a cup means a standard measuring cup.
Indicated endnotes can be found on the next page.

Endnotes

1. Serve two food items. Each food item must be from a different food component. Juice may not be served when milk is served as the only other component.
2. Shall be served as a beverage, or on cereal, or use part of it for each purpose.
3. Shall be served as a beverage.
4. Serve two or more kinds of vegetable(s) and/or fruit(s) or a combination of both. Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice may be counted to meet not more than one-half of this requirement.
5. All grain/bread items must be enriched or whole-grain, made from enriched or whole-grain meal or flour, or if it is a cereal, the product must be whole-grain, enriched or fortified. Bran and germ are credited the same as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour.
6. Either volume (cup) or weight (oz.) whichever is less.
7. Must meet the requirements in Appendix A of the SFSP regulations.
8. No more than 50 percent of the requirement shall be met with nuts or seeds. Nuts or seeds shall be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the requirement. When determining combinations, 1 oz. of nuts or seeds is equal to 1 oz. of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish.



Delivery of Meals

Make sure the site supervisor and designated site personnel know that meals must be delivered within 1 hour before each meal service if proper facilities do not exist onsite for storing the food.

When Meals Are Served

In addition to making sure that meals served meet the meal pattern requirements, be aware of time restrictions for the meal service (except at residential camps). Observe that:

- 3 hours elapse between the beginning of one approved meal service (including snacks) and the beginning of another.
- 4 hours elapse between lunch and supper when a migrant or day camp site serves lunch and supper with no afternoon snack between the two meals.
- Supper begins before 7:00 p.m. (unless the State agency grants a waiver) and, in all cases, must end by 8:00 p.m.
- The serving period for lunch and supper does not exceed 2 hours.
- The serving period for breakfast and snacks does not exceed 1 hour.



Unitized Meals

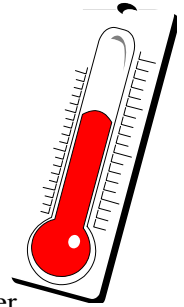
All meals must be served as complete units. This means that every component of the meal must be served at the same time to the participant (except at sites where “offer versus serve” or OVS is allowed. This is discussed in the next paragraph). Sometimes site workers might want to split up a meal between several participants or serve an incomplete meal to a participant. Except where OVS is allowed, the complete meal **must** be served to each participant as a unit. The nutritional value of the meal depends on each participant receiving all the components. *Serving incomplete meals or serving components separately are serious violations.* Your sponsor cannot receive reimbursement for incomplete meals served to participants.

Meal Pattern Exceptions

In some cases, sponsors may be approved to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements of other Child Nutrition Programs instead of the SFSP meal pattern requirements. Further, OVS is an option for school sponsors. At OVS sites, the completed meal that meets the SFSP meal pattern requirements, as shown on page 14, must be offered to participants. However, participants may choose not to take one or more of the food items offered. Your sponsor will provide you with the appropriate requirements for the sites you are monitoring that have been granted an exception.

Keep These Food Safety Rules in Mind

- Keep hot foods HOT! (Keep food at 140 °F or above)
- Keep cold foods COLD! (Refrigerate or chill food at 40 °F or below)
- Keep frozen food in a freezer at 0 °F or lower.
- Be sure thermometers are available and use them properly.
- Cook hazardous foods to proper internal temperatures. Use a meat thermometer.
- Do not partially cook food one day and complete cooking the next day.
- Prepare sandwiches and salads with a minimum amount of handling. Use disposable plastic gloves.
- Promptly refrigerate or freeze leftovers. Divide large quantities into smaller containers or use shallow pans, and cover loosely for quick cooling. Once cooled, tightly cover and date leftovers.
- Reheat leftovers to at least 165 °F.
- Maintain proper holding temperatures, 140 °F or above.
- Thaw poultry and meat in a refrigerator and not on counters. Refreeze only if ice crystals are still present.
- Never let perishable food reach a temperature between 40 °F and 140 °F. Discard food if it does.
- Keep meals and milk not being served at the time in the refrigerator or cooler at a temperature of 40 °F or below. Hot meals should be in a warming unit or insulated box at a holding temperature of 140 °F or more.
- Empty garbage cans daily. They should be kept tightly covered and thoroughly cleaned. Use plastic or paper liners.
- Remember that you cannot determine food safety by sight, taste, odor, or smell. If there is *any* doubt, throw the food away.
- Follow instructions exactly on how to use and clean kitchen equipment.
- Train food service employees on the safe use of all types of equipment and on personal hygiene.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and first-aid kit handy and instruct all personnel in their use.



Questions and Answers

1. As a monitor, what are some of my major responsibilities?

You are the direct link between the sponsor and the sites - the official representative of the sponsor. It is your responsibility to ensure the sites operate smoothly and in accordance with program guidance and requirements - checking site operations; conducting training with site personnel when necessary; conducting pre-operational visits for sites; and conducting visits and reviews of all your assigned sites to ensure food service is operating properly. You must also reconcile meal counts; prepare accurate reports of your visits and reviews; and inform your sponsor and site supervisors of any problems found. A description of your responsibilities can be found on page 3 of this handbook.

2. What is the difference between a site “visit” and site “review”?

When you monitor program operations at a site, you will make either a “visit” or a “review”. A site “visit” requires you to make sure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any problems are immediately resolved. A site “review” requires you to determine if the site is meeting all program requirements. To accomplish this, you will have to observe the entire meal service from beginning to end. All visits and reviews must be documented. You will find a sample visit and review forms on pages 20 to 26 of this handbook.

3. What are some of the things I should look for during the meal preparation or meal service?

On the day of your visit, you should observe the meal preparation and if meals are delivered, note if they were delivered on time. If prepared at the site, note if whether or not the meals were prepared within the health and safety standards set forth by the sponsor and the local or State health authorities. When observing the meal service, note the number of meals delivered or prepared; the number of complete meals served to participants and program adults, the number of leftover meals; the number of non-reimbursable meals served, if any, and whether or not the meals are being counted accurately by site personnel. You should also check to see that nondiscrimination posters are in place, and that all participants have access to and are being served meals. Finally you should complete your forms before you leave, and make corrective actions on site, if at all possible. A full listing of what to look for begins on page 5 of this handbook.

4. Should I be concerned with food safety, or is that the responsibility of the workers at the site?

Although it is primary responsibility of site staff to ensure meals are being safely prepared, it is your responsibility to report whether they are taking appropriate steps to make sure the foods they receive or prepare are safe for participants to consume. Note whether staff check the temperature of foods they receive from a central kitchen, or whether they check the temperature of foods they prepare on-site. Note where and how they store foods, and check that the temperatures on refrigerators or freezers are adequate. During food preparation, check to see if staff are following local or State health and safety standards. Also check to see that there are fire extinguishers and first aid kits nearby and available for use.

5. What is a meal pattern requirement?

A meal pattern requirement is a listing of food components that are required to be served to the participants in the SFSP. Each component in each meal must be present in order for your sponsor to receive reimbursement for that meal. When the meal pattern requirements are followed, not only does the sponsor receive proper reimbursement, but the participant eating the meal receives a well-balanced, nutritious meal that supplies the kinds and amounts of foods that will meet their nutrient and energy needs. You can find the SFSP Meal Pattern Requirements on pages 14 and 15 of this handbook.

